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ABSTRACT

This module on the leisure experience is intended to give the supervisor or manager an understanding of the nature and scope of the leisure market and key trends and developments. The material is presented in a self-instructional format in three sections. At the beginning of each section is a statement of the objectives that will be achieved as a result of working through the material that follows. Users of the module are asked to relate information given in the text to their own experience and knowledge. Where appropriate, suggested solutions to these questions are given on the opposite or following page. Topics are as follows: (1) what is meant by leisure; (2) the demand for leisure; and (3) identifying leisure opportunities. (YLB)

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OPERATIONAL
MANAGEMENT
PROGRAMME

CE 058 674

Leisure Management
MODULE

OPERATIONAL
MANAGEMENT
PROGRAMME

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THE LEISURE EXPERIENCE

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HOW TO USE THIS UNIT

The Leisure Experience is the first of a series of three self-study units in the HCTC's Leisure Management module. Companion units cover *The Leisure Operation* and *Promoting Leisure*.

The material in *The Leisure Experience* is divided into three sections: at the start of each is a statement of the objectives you will be able to achieve by working through the material that follows.

From time to time you will be asked to relate information given in the text to your own experience and knowledge. Space is provided below these activities for you to write your answers. Where appropriate, suggested solutions to the questions are given on the next page.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this self-study unit is to give you an understanding of:

- the nature and scope of the leisure market
- key trends and developments.

This will help you to understand what customers expect from the 'leisure experience'. Thus you will be able to see where your particular business fits into the market, and be in a stronger position to help identify opportunities for new leisure developments.

SECTION 1
What is meant by leisure?

After completing this section you will be able to:

- describe the broad scope of leisure, and the range and diversity of leisure activities
- state the 'benefits' of leisure: what people seek and what they get out of their leisure experiences
- identify how people choose their leisure activities and the factors which influence their choice.

THE LEISURE EXPERIENCE

What is meant by the term 'leisure'? Typical dictionary definitions include 'time free from occupation or employment' and 'the opportunity afforded by free time, time at one's own disposal'. The problem with such definitions for the leisure management student and for those involved in developing aspects of the leisure industry is that they are too broad. They refer to the time available and not to the manner in which such time is spent: 'time free from occupation or employment' could be spent on all sorts of activities which might not be regarded as 'leisure' occupations. For example, is do-it-yourself home decorating leisure or work? And what about preparing a meal for friends?

So that the boundaries of the leisure market can be established, a more precise definition of leisure activities and experiences is required.

How would you define the term 'leisure' in its broadest sense? Think of a short, practical definition that you can use to differentiate between leisure and non-leisure activities and write it down in the space below.

Consider the following definition:

> Leisure is any activity which relaxes, refreshes and recreates.

This emphasises the physical and psychological benefits of leisure. It also emphasises the tremendous scope for personal choice and taste.

- Some people find home decorating relaxing and creatively satisfying. To others it is not only boring, but hard work, the opposite of leisure and relaxation.
- Some people like to spend all their leisure time 'passively' – watching television, for example. Others want to participate or compete – playing sports or card games, to take two random examples.
- Some people want to spend leisure time at home, with family. For others, an essential element of the leisure experience is that of soçialising outside the home.

People's hobbies, interests and pastimes vary greatly, as do the time and money which they can afford to devote to them.

The key point to emerge from thinking about the definition of leisure is how very wide-ranging leisure is. Leisure is a matter of personal satisfaction and choice, and these are infinitely variable. So, when you are thinking about the leisure market, keep an open mind. People can be 'relaxed, refreshed and recreated' by all sorts of things!

LEISURE ACTIVITIES

The previous exercise introduced you to the wide range of activities which can be described as leisure pursuits. The next stage is to differentiate between:

- the types of leisure activity and experiences which are relevant to the leisure industry, for example, taking holidays, eating out, gambling, playing bingo, shopping, dancing, using sports facilities, visiting the theatre, stately homes and gardens, museums and art galleries
- and those which are not relevant to the industry, such as watching a video or television programme at home, listening to the radio or a CD, home decorating, cooking and entertaining at home, reading, gardening, completing jigsaw puzzles and collecting stamps.

Clearly it is those leisure experiences which are relevant to the industry that are of particular interest. These can then be divided into distinct types: for example, you might begin by grouping them under the broad headings of:

- sports
- holidays
- arts
- crafts.

Or you might classify them in terms of the type of experience they provide. For example:

- are they of an intellectual or physical nature?
- do they involve people as spectators or participants? That is, are they passive or active?

In order to plan the development of a leisure facility or service, leisure activities have to be thought of in terms of:

- the type of customer who will buy them
- the facilities which you will need to provide those customers.

For example, if you were in a position to consider launching a new leisure venture from scratch, you would undoubtedly have a clear idea of the category of facility or service that you wanted to create, be it a Swiss holiday, a swimming pool, a night club, an Italian restaurant or a sports centre. You would have an idea of the market for your proposed venture, and the types and numbers of customers who would use or buy it, and you would plan your new business accordingly.

If, however, you were planning to develop and promote facilities for leisure activities as a means of expanding an existing business, your selection of leisure facility would be made according to your existing facilities and customers. The purpose of introducing new facilities into the business plan would be to increase the use of existing facilities, thus increasing revenue from them, and to increase the numbers of customers.

If, for example, you were running an up-market country house hotel catering for affluent middle aged clients and you wanted to introduce leisure facilities, you might choose between opening a high quality expensive restaurant and a luxurious indoor pool with jacuzzi, sauna, and massage facilities. Either might enable you to charge more for the rooms, attract more customers to the hotel and generate additional revenue by attracting non residents. You would be highly unlikely to choose to add a squash court or a night club because of the nature of the existing facilities and customers.

On a smaller scale, if you were planning a more modest leisure facility for the same up-market country house hotel, you might consider holding bridge evenings or water colour painting weekends, and you would be unlikely to have either the right facilities or the right customers for aerobics classes or car maintenance courses.

Make a list below of as many types of leisure activities as you can think of. Then use the page opposite to group or classify them.

You are likely to have included many of the following, possibly under different categories, more appropriate to the leisure operations you know best:

OUTDOOR SPORTS
golf, ice skating, football, bowls, cricket, rugby, polo, cycling, canoeing, rowing, parachuting, flying, windsurfing, diving, sub-aqua, snorkelling, skiing

INDOOR SPORTS
squash, ten-pin bowling, badminton, ice skating, snooker, pool, table tennis, darts

OUTDOOR OR INDOOR SPORTS
swimming, tennis, archery, athletics, circuit training

SPECTATOR SPORTS
cricket, football, rugby, snooker, tennis

HEALTH AND FITNESS
aerobics, gym routine, health farm, karate, judo

COUNTRY PURSUITS
hill walking, climbing, fishing, fly fishing, camping

ART, CRAFT AND DIY COURSES
watercolour, drawing, model-making, pottery, needlework, knitting, car maintenance, cookery, photography

BOARD AND CARD GAMES
chess, bridge, dominoes, backgammon, cribbage, bingo

MUSIC, DRAMA AND FILM
dancing, theatre, opera, amateur dramatics, poetry readings, concert and cinema

RESTAURANT AND EATING
quick food, ethnic food, pubs, wine bars

HISTORICAL, NATURAL HISTORY
historical sights, stately homes, zoos, wildlife parks, planetarium, libraries, art galleries, museums

SPECIAL INTEREST ACTIVITIES
archaeology, steam railways, canals, architecture, engineering

Now take another look at this selection, together with the lists that you have just made, and consider whether facilities for the activity would have to be:

- *'stand alone' and purpose built, for example, squash court*
- *or whether they could be provided as an extension to an existing business, for example, bridge.*

On the two lists mark in some way which category each item falls into, for example with the letters S or E, a tick or a cross, or different colour highlighter pens.

This activity will help you begin to think of leisure experiences in terms of the facilities that they require and how and where these facilities can be established. These aspects are returned to in Section 3, and considered in detail in *The Leisure Operation*.

INFLUENCES ON LEISURE CHOICE

Given that the scope for the leisure industry is so wide, and the individual has so much choice, in order to plan effectively the development and promotion of leisure you need to understand:

- how people discriminate between different types of leisure
- and what affects their choice.

In general, choice is determined by:

1. benefits: what people get out of an activity
2. what they have to invest in terms of time, physical and mental effort, and money.

By thinking in terms of what benefits people are seeking, and what they are likely to be able to afford to invest, you can identify those activities which best meet their requirements. This puts you in a position to sell benefits in terms that customers will understand and respond to.

It has already been established that people differ greatly in the benefits they seek from leisure. Note down below what you consider to be the most important benefits of leisure activity for each of the broad population groups identified.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

YOUNG SINGLE ADULTS

MARRIED COUPLES

THE DISABLED

RETIRED PEOPLE

Now for these same broad population groups, consider how their choice is influenced by the costs: time, physical and mental effort, and money. Indicate below what resources they have available by circling as appropriate:

S = small, M = moderate, L = large

	Time	*Physical/mental effort*	*Money*
SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN	S M L	S M L	S M L
YOUNG SINGLE ADULTS	S M L	S M L	S M L
MARRIED COUPLES	S M L	S M L	S M L
THE DISABLED	S M L	S M L	S M L
RETIRED PEOPLE	S M L	S M L	S M L

Now list below six activities for each population group that will provide the benefits that they are seeking, within the resources they have available in terms of time, physical and mental effort, and money.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

YOUNG SINGLE ADULTS

MARRIED COUPLES

THE DISABLED

RETIRED PEOPLE

BENEFITS	RESOURCES			ACTIVITIES
	Time	*Physical/mental*	*Money*	
SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN	Moderate	Large	Small	
Promoting growth and health Developing physical and mental co-ordination Teaching inter-personal and social skills through the medium of team games Relieving the stress of classroom lessons				Swimming Ice-skating Badminton Cycling Netball/ football Canoeing/ rowing
YOUNG SINGLE ADULTS	Large	Large	Large	
Making social contacts with the opposite sex Meeting friends Providing relief from the stress of doing a job and building a career Improving physical strength and appearance Strengthening and enhancing personal identity through the development of physical or cultural skills				Squash Swimming Tennis Fitness gym Windsurfing Snooker/pool
MARRIED COUPLES	Small	Moderate	Moderate	
Relief from the stress of job and career Relief from the tedium of domestic chores An aid to developing healthy family relationships				Walking Squash Aerobics Sauna Music Tennis
THE DISABLED	Large	Small	Small	
To counteract the depressive effects of disability To promote confidence To compensate for the limitations caused by the disability				Music Card games Fitness gym Clay pigeon shooting Arts and crafts Archery
RETIRED PEOPLE	Large	Moderate	Large	
Relief from boredom Maintaining health and mobility Providing social contacts to counter loneliness				Golf Bowls Arts and crafts Fishing Card games

Clearly, an individual's choice of leisure will depend on natural aptitudes and inclinations as well as personal taste. An athletic, physically well co-ordinated person with a good ball-eye is more likely to take up and enjoy tennis than someone who is slow and short-sighted. A young school child is unlikely to perceive any of the benefits listed, the objective will simply be to enjoy herself or himself; an older child will have interests that she or he wishes to pursue and develop.

In this section you have learnt that leisure activities are many and varied, and that, as a consequence, the market for leisure is large and wide-ranging. The demand for leisure will be examined in greater depth in Section 2.

SECTION 2
The demand for leisure

After completing this section you will be able to:

- describe briefly how the demand for leisure has been affected by social and economic changes in the past ten years or so
- classify the type or types of customer which are likely to be attracted by leisure facilities
- demonstrate how spending on leisure is affected by customers' perception of what offers the best value for money.

THE HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL FRAMEWORK

We are said to be at the dawn of a 'leisure age'. Certainly more people have more time and money than ever before for leisure activities. It is useful to look at how the demand, the 'market', for leisure has been affected by social and economic change in the past, because an understanding of such influences on the industry helps you to make predictions for the future.

Consider, for example, the growing number of older people and their better health owing to improved health care. Earlier this century a man who worked all his life, either in a manual job or in an office, was not expected to live for more than two years after retirement.

Health is an important factor influencing the leisure industry, not just its older customers: a growing awareness of the importance of exercise in health promotion has given rise to health clubs and their hi-tech facilities for achieving fitness.

Technological advances have obviously played their part here.

Fitness has become fashionable: many health clubs are expensive and membership is 'socially desirable'. Bars in such establishments are important meeting places. Some employers provide staff membership of health clubs as a 'perk'. They have recognised the benefits in terms of the health and well-being of individual staff members and the opportunities for improving inter-staff relations through shared leisure experiences.

The 'Yuppy' group emerged in the 1980s as a result of a particular economic climate, and with it came a particular set of leisure activities.

As European holidays have become more widely available to all sections of the population in recent years, there has been an increase in the popularity of sporting activities pioneered outside the UK, such as skiing and windsurfing.

Write down below some further examples of social and economic changes affecting demand for leisure activities, the leisure market, over the past ten years or so.

Your list may have included the following:

- reduction in the length of the working week
- wider ownership of labour-saving household equipment
- increase in average annual holiday entitlement
- increase in disposable income, that is the amount left over after paying for essentials like food, mortgage or rent, heating, clothing
- the increase in the retired population
- the educational effects of television
- government promotion of health and fitness
- commercial sponsorship of sport

Take the question of wider ownership of labour-saving household equipment. Study the figures below showing the proportion of households in Great Britain owning particular consumer goods in 1983 and 1989. Comment in the space below on what influences you think these trends have had on the leisure market.

	1983	*1989*
	%	*%*
Washing machine	*80*	*88*
Clothes-dryer	*38*	*44*
Dishwasher	*4*	*11*
Microwave oven	*–*	*48*
Fridge/freezer	*26*	*49*
Power lawnmower	*51*	*64*
Powered tool (saw/sander)	*20*	*33*
Telephone	*77*	*87*

The figures show a substantial increase in ownership of labour-saving equipment. You might have related this trend to the changed role of the housewife and mother, and the greater number of women in part and full-time employment. This would have an impact on the family income, and the time and money available for leisure pursuits.

The following table shows some significant changes in the level of participation in various sports. Write down in the space at the foot of the table what you consider to be the reasons for those changes.

Percentage of adults aged 16 years and over, participating in active sports games and physical activities (from General Household Survey, 1977, 1986)

	1977		1986	
	% participating	order of popularity	% participating	order of popularity
Walking (2+ miles)	22	1	23	1
Darts	10	2	7	4
Swimming (outdoors)	7	3	7	4
Swimming (indoors)	6	4	11	2
Snooker/billiards/pool	6	5	11	2
Golf	4	6	4	6
Fishing	4	7	3	8
Football	3	8	3	8
Tennis	3	9	3	–
Table tennis	3	10	1	–
Keep fit/yoga	1	–	4	6
Athletics (including jogging)	1	–	3	10

In your answer you might have looked at the decline in the popularity of darts. This decline may reflect the trend away from public house drinking due to drink/drive legislation, the growth of off-licence sales of alcohol for home drinking and the emergence of the wine bar.

You may well have attributed the increased popularity of indoor swimming, keep-fit, yoga, athletics and jogging to increasing public concern about health, and greater awareness of the links between obesity and heart disease. The increased participation in snooker, billiards and pool is perhaps harder to explain but is likely to result from the interest generated by TV coverage of these sports, coupled with the upgrading of commercial playing venues.

The following tables show how the age structure of the UK population has changed since 1984 and how it is expected to change between 1986 and the end of the century (source: Leisure Consultants, based on OPCS and Henley Centre). How do you think these changes will affect the popularity of different sports activities over the next ten years or so? On the page opposite list five sports activities which you believe will increase in popularity, and five which will decrease in popularity, and briefly explain why.

	Age groups	Numbers (million) in 1988	Changes (thousand) 1984-88	1988-1992
Children	0-15 years	1.47	-424	+204
Young adults	16-24 years	8.21	-181	-966
Family formation	25-44 years	16.24	+1033	+565
Middle aged	45-64 years	12.20	-394	+446
Young pensioners	65-79 years	6.90	+255	-22
Old pensioners	80+ years	1.97	+237	+227
TOTAL UK		56.99	+526	+454

Major demographic trends projected 1986-2000

Age group (years)	% change
20-24	-28.7
35-44	+11.9
45-59	+17.7

Likely to increase in popularity *Reason*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Likely to decrease in popularity *Reason*

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Examples of sports likely to INCREASE in popularity as a result of demographic changes:

CYCLING

A combination of concern for physical fitness and for the environment is likely to boost the use of bicycles as an alternative to car driving for certain sorts of journey, such as travel to work.

GOLF

This sport appeals to a large number of older and retired people since it provides social contact and helps to maintain health and mobility. Retired people have the necessary time for the game and it does not require great physical strength or effort compared with other sports.

SWIMMING

Swimming is an exercise that can be enjoyed by people of all ages, individually, competitively, and with friends and family. Swimming pools are generally accessible, and many people working in towns can go swimming in a lunch break or after work. Swimming is an excellent form of exercise for the young and physically fit, it can also be therapeutic for disabled people and it provides a form of gentle exercise for those who are older and perhaps less fit.

KEEP-FIT, YOGA AND FITNESS TRAINING

These sports can be tailored to suit all ages and, given that the wish for improved physical fitness will continue to be important to the population as a whole, these sports are likely to continue to increase in popularity.

TENNIS

Tennis as a spectator sport is immensely popular with all ages and it is therefore likely that it will continue to increase in popularity as a participation sport, because, unlike squash, it can be played at a pace to suit the fitness and agility of the players.

Sports likely to DECREASE in popularity as a result of demographic changes:

MOTOR RACING

This is not exclusively a sport for younger people, but as a spectator sport it appeals more to young than old. It is environmentally damaging and dependent on tremendous levels of sponsorship, so for reasons not strictly demographic, it is highly likely to decrease in popularity as companies wishing to safeguard their public image become reluctant to promote their names through such a sport.

DARTS

This sport is likely to continue to decline as the trend away from pubs continues.

DISCO DANCING

This is an activity that has always been for young adults; one can therefore infer that it is likely to decline as a result of the projected demographic changes.

SQUASH

Like disco dancing, this is an activity that has always been for young adults, and it is not regarded as medically safe for older people to play, and it too is therefore likely to decline.

WATER-SKIING

Water-skiing, like motor racing, appeals more to young adults, and could decline in popularity for that reason alone, but is also likely to be affected by environmental concern. There is increasing concern about water pollution caused by boats and about fuel consumption. As motor boats pollute the water, disturb the bird life and burn a lot of fuel to give one person an opportunity to practise his or her sport, it is not unreasonable to infer that this sport is likely to decline in favour of gentler boating activities which would also have a greater appeal to older people.

Read the case study which follows. It shows how one particular leisure business has been affected by trends over time, and how its management responded to those trends. On page 27 you will be asked to suggest what changes will be required in the next ten years.

Case Study: Moonfleet Manor, Weymouth

Moonfleet Manor is situated 8 miles from Weymouth in a secluded position with fine views of the sea and Chesil Beach, a nature reserve. The area is well known for its many beauty spots and tourist attractions, including Abbotsbury Swannery.

The hotel has its origins as far back as 1564, when it was known as Fleet House, the seat of the Mohun family. Later it featured in the classic children's book 'Moonfleet' by J Meade Faulkner – a story of smuggling and adventure. The summer house referred to in the book stands in the hotel grounds to this day.

The hotel is a little difficult to find and because of its remote location there is not much passing trade. At one time a house on the approach road from Dorchester to Weymouth also belonged to the hotel's owners and they had a massive sign advertising The Moonfleet painted on the wall of the house. Although the house has since been sold, it was a condition that the advertising remained.

In 1971 when Jan and Bruce Hemingway bought the Moonfleet, only 5 rooms had private bathrooms. The only leisure facilities were an outdoor swimming pool and a ballroom. Not even the estate agents could describe the hotel as a thriving business.

With Christmas approaching, one of the new owner's first initiatives was to mailshot 150 travel agents in London promoting a house party. The result was encouraging: 50 guests including 15 from Japan. Another success was filling the ballroom with two sittings of 100 guests for Christmas lunch.

1972

In April, the under-utilised cellars were turned into a bar called Blackbeard's Vaults (an association with the novel 'Moonfleet'). The conversion was not expensive: beer crates were turned into seats, barrels into tables and an old boat placed in the central room as a unique feature. Folk singers regularly asked to be allowed to perform, in return for passing a hat around so the bar's many customers could show their appreciation of the performance.

1973

The Moonfleet became one of the first hotels in Britain to have its own squash courts (two). Local PE teachers gave their support and expertise. Advertisements in the newly launched squash magazines brought groups from Surrey and Berkshire for the weekends. (The connection with these two counties has been kept up ever since.) Write-ups appeared in Canadian squash magazines advertising 'Moonfleet Weekends'. The revenue from these squash weekends enabled the Hemingways to upgrade the bedrooms and add more private bathrooms.

1974

The ballroom was converted into 4 bedrooms with their own showers and toilets. The Hemingways took full advantage of the Moonfleet connection when the book was serialised on TV. A leading monthly journal placed the Moonfleet in the top 11 out of around 300 hotels included in its 'Family Welcome Guide'.

1975

Blackbeard's Vaults, the cellar bar, was re-vamped and changed into a discotheque.

1976

A hard tennis court was built. A snooker table was installed in a spare room in the cellar.

1977

The snooker had proved very popular, but the customers were unhappy about playing in a 'cold' cellar, and so the table was moved upstairs. The demand for rooms encouraged the Hemingways to extend the hotel, adding 11 new bedrooms, all with private bathrooms, a new 100-seater restaurant, and move and upgrade the kitchen. The swimming pool was rarely used, as people expected it to be warmer. As it was in such an exposed position the only solution was to convert it to an indoor pool, and begin a steady programme of improving the facilities.

Describe in the space opposite the sort of changes you might have expected the Hemingways to make in the next ten years, given that they seem determined to keep pace with changes in demand. Do not be too concerned that you have few details of their business.

Now turn over to read what the Hemingways actually did. On page 30 you will be asked to suggest some improvements for the 1990s.

1978

The arrival of a daughter in the Hemingway family led them to focus attention on children, updating the family rooms to include full-sized bunks. Room listening devices were installed, and early suppers offered. And there can't be too many hotels in Britain where Father Christmas (in the guise of Bruce Hemingway) actually descends the chimney, to the delight of the children staying in the hotel on the special Christmas package.

In the same year all the first floor rooms were given private bathrooms, and a conference room was created in the centre well of the hotel, capable of holding 50 people. The work was partly funded by an English Tourist Board grant, but the costs were higher than expected as the building fabric was partly rotten.

1979

The Hemingway's son became a great BMX fan (bicycle motorcross - stunt riding over a rough course). A track built in the hotel grounds received considerable publicity.

1980

An adventure playground, inspired and partly created by various members of staff, was built in the small wood in the hotel grounds. The pool changing rooms were improved. A spa bath was installed, but this was not a success so it was exchanged for a sauna and sunbeds.

1982

By knocking down an internal wall, the room adjacent to the residents bar was enlarged to take the snooker table.

1983/4

The Blue Lagoon Leisure Club was evolved. By this time the outdoor pool had become three separate indoor pools, both for fun and serious swimming.

1985

A multi-gym was added. Annual membership to the leisure club was a very modest £45, giving members full access to the facilities hotel guests could enjoy.

1986/7

The reception area was improved by knocking out the staircase and altering a wall. Four of the ground floor bedrooms were converted to two superior rooms, each with a small kitchen so they could be used for mini-conferences. One of the new rooms was designed and equipped to be suitable for the disabled.

The pool had only been supervised in the summer – at other times guests could collect the key from reception – and Bruce Hemingway filtered and cleaned the pool himself. Now responsibility was handed over to the newly appointed manager of the Leisure Club. Club membership was developed, swimming lessons and keep fit classes were provided.

The Hemingways decided that conferences were not regular enough to fill the hotel outside school holidays. The idea of an indoor bowls rink was hit upon. The land was available, and a low-level building would not be offensive to the countryside. The sport was growing in popularity, no hotel in Britain could boast such a facility so the development would once again put the Moonfleet at the forefront of coming trends. The Hemingways advertised and found a Middleton Club player who wanted to sell his sports shop and have a change of career. With the aid of another ETB grant the kitchen garden was built over to create four rinks of international bowling competition specification, a large bar and lounge area overlooking the rinks, changing rooms, sports shop and launderette. The rink was open from 10 am to 11 pm, seven days a week.

1988

Two hard tennis courts were constructed on the site of the old BMX track.

Now use the space below to suggest some improvements which would ensure that the Moonfleet kept abreast with leisure trends for the 1990s.

The Hemingway's plans include:

- Another conference room and a skittle alley to adjoin the squash courts. The conference market has become more buoyant, and the Moonfleet is successfully developing links with local companies who require an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity for their mini-meetings.
- Convert the coach house into 8 self-catering apartments. The dining room could not be easily extended, and in any case more people now prefer self-catering (if not, they could use the Cellar Bistro).
- Covert the original tennis court into 3 short tennis courts, possibly roofed over by the construction of a light-weight framed structure.

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Examples of recent leisure developments

- Continued expansion of waterfront sights in the UK with multi-million pound mixed developments of marinas, shopping, housing, commercial outlets, tourist attractions, bars and restaurants.
- Construction of the £230 million Meadowhall Shopping and Leisure Centre near Sheffield, within one hour's drive of 20% of the British population. The MetroCentre at Gateshead is the largest covered shopping complex in Europe. The leisure/shopping concept has transformed decaying areas of Boston, Baltimore and other major cities in the USA.
- A huge investment programme by Butlins has brought the entertainment facilities at the company's Holiday Worlds right up-to-date. Center Parcs, aiming at a different economic group, with self-catering only, have enjoyed very high occupancy levels. With all-weather facilities, the company aims to provide 'a British holiday which cannot be ruined by British weather'.
- The importance of television in people's lives is highlighted by the opening to the public of Granada TV Studios Tour (the home of Coronation Street). Short breaks in the Southampton area have been developed based on the popularity of Howards Way. American football, snooker and bowls have increased in popularity as a result of TV coverage.
- British Nuclear Fuels at Sellafield, Dartington Glass in Devon, and the Ford Motor Company in Dagenham have attracted visitors and tourists on the theme of 'industry at work'. Heritage tourism has been successfully exploited by York, Oxford and Canterbury. The Design Museum in London's Dockland aims to enhance the influence of good design on the British economy and culture.

International influences

People in the UK today are influenced in their choice of leisure pursuits by international trends.

The British spend more on holidays abroad than on holidays in Britain. Many people are able to spend part of their leisure time abroad. Air travel and all-inclusive holidays have become more accessible. The availability of cheap transatlantic flights has given the opportunity for many British families to visit the great American leisure institutions such as Disney Land. Many British go abroad to ski. Others enjoy a safari holiday in Africa, or the beaches and sunny climate of far distant islands like Mauritius and Seychelles, or the attractions and culture of Thailand, India or Brazil, for example.

Having enjoyed the food and wine of different countries on holiday and business visits, the British have become more adventurous in their culinary tastes. Hence the ever increasing popularity of restaurants serving not only French, Italian and Greek food, but Chinese, Indian, Thai and Malaysian dishes – to name but a few. As a result of the American influence on fast food, burgers are more readily available on the British high street than fish and chips.

Consider why the leisure market is likely to become even more international in the future and note below some of the reasons for this.

These are some of the factors likely to make the leisure market even more international:

- the creation of a European Single Market in 1992
- the opening of the Channel Tunnel
- the decline of communism and the liberalisation of Eastern Europe
- the growth of satellite TV and international TV stations
- cheaper air travel for longer distances
- rising living standards in Eastern Europe and the Third World.

THE LEISURE CUSTOMER

In Section 1 you looked at the ways in which the various types of customer are influenced by different benefits and costs in their choice of leisure. You know that you cannot regard all customers as one uniform group. When you are planning a new leisure product you have to match it with the appropriate customer type.

> When you have planned and created your new product and you come to advertising and promoting it, the same selection principle applies: you have to target your sales messages to the particular groups of people who are most likely to be interested in what you are offering. This is dealt with in more depth in the companion self-study unit *Promoting Leisure*.

You can begin to classify customers into basic groups according to:

- age, sex, marital status, number and age of children
- home address (to establish location for catchment area)
- occupation (hence likely disposable income and time available for leisure).

If, for example, your establishment is considering developing two new squash courts, you could identify your target customer group as follows:

- aged 18-35
- male and female (emphasis on male)
- single and young married, no children
- home address within 2/3 miles of courts
- office based work – hence need for strenuous exercise in leisure time.

If your establishment is a club and keeps records of existing customers, you could analyse them to see what numbers of existing customers fit into the above category, and so might use the new courts.

For some purposes you may need to classify customers in more detail. For example, you may wish to group them according to:

- type of leisure activity already engaged in
- time spent on leisure pursuit
- frequency of leisure pursuit
- membership of a group or club.

If, for example, you were planning to introduce weekend watercolour workshops at your country house hotel, which regularly offered a number of other workshops, you would start by looking at lists of those customers already engaged in compatible activities. You would not consider potential customers those who have only previously attended evening courses, or courses on car maintenance.

The precise way in which you need to classify your customers depends upon your product.

Assume that you are working in a high-priced country house hotel with its own swimming pool and fitness gym. Consider what type or types of customer you would be looking for, and use the space below to classify them.

Now repeat the exercise, but this time assume you are working in a local authority leisure centre.

You might have described your ideal country house hotel customer as follows:

- aged 35 to 55
- man, or woman, with partner
- living within 100 miles of the hotel
- employed as a professional person or senior manager
- interested in outdoor pursuit easily enjoyed in your area, perhaps golf.

For the local authority leisure centre, your ideal customer for some facilities might be:

- aged 18 to 30
- male or female
- single
- living no more than 5 miles away
- in paid employment.

You might have looked at the various facilities provided by the leisure centre and identified different groups that could be targeted for each facility. For example, the swimming pool might be used by the above category in the lunch hours, evenings and weekends, but during office hours it could be used by schools, or by special groups such as mothers with young babies, or the disabled.

Repeat the exercise for your own establishment, using a new leisure facility of your choice (recently introduced, planned, or considered appropriate by you). What type or types of customer would the new facility attract?

Briefly describe below the part played by leisure activities in:

- *education, for instance at school*
- *business, for instance at conferences, and for business people*

and what market opportunities they present your establishment.

Leisure activities, sports in particular, play an important part in education programmes. They provide relief from mental and intellectual stress, aid physical development, assist in personal development and self-discovery, and help develop social skills. Visits to museums, libraries, zoos and other leisure establishments are part of many school programmes: a trip on a steam train may be just a joy ride for a holiday customer, but a teacher can use it to teach children about the industrial revolution, transport, and engineering.

Leisure establishments who can offer residential courses for school age children with a good combination of interesting instruction and exciting leisure activities can market these at times of the year when the facilities would otherwise be closed, or only operating at very low occupancy. Prices can be kept competitive as they only have to cover the direct costs of keeping the establishment functioning – most of the profit will be generated during the high season.

Leisure activities are an important part of conferences, because they provide the opportunity to relax and socialise with other delegates. Holiday centres and seaside resorts are active in the conference market because they can offer a total package of:

- accommodation
- venues for meetings
- leisure and entertainment facilities.

Business people away from home need some form of relaxation after a long day of travelling and meetings. Many like to exercise as a way of keeping their weight down, staying fit, and counteracting stress. They will therefore have a preference for establishments which offer these facilities.

THE PRICE OF LEISURE

The amount of money customers have to spend on leisure is determined by their disposable or discretionary income – that is to say, the money they have left over after paying the mortgage or rent on their home and other essentials like heat and light, clothing and food.

In general, the amount of disposable income has been increasing in the United Kingdom in recent years. However, the proportion and amount of disposable income varies considerably by social group. For example, older people who have paid off their mortgages and have no dependent children will have more disposable income than young couples who are buying a house and have school-age children, while young professional couples, both of whom are in full-time employment, may have the highest disposable income.

Of course not all the disposable income of a particular individual or household will be spent on leisure pursuits. Some people may choose to spend all or most of it on the monthly repayments for a new car or a video recorder. Others will spend a large proportion of their regular disposable income on leisure pursuits which they enjoy at home – listening to CDs, for example, or playing computer games. Very few, however, will base their spending decisions purely on the basis of cost and cheapness. 'Value for money' is an all important consideration, whether the product is a consumer durable or a leisure activity.

Consider the trends in sales of foreign package holidays over the last ten years. As disposable incomes have increased, holidays abroad have become more affordable. The public have chosen them in large numbers because they felt they were getting better weather, better accommodation – in fact better value for their money – than a less expensive holiday in Britain. The search for good value rather than cheapness saw a drop in popularity of low cost package holidays in Spain and the Mediterranean, while more expensive holidays to places like the Far East and Australia are selling comparatively well.

The activities overleaf are designed to help you compare three leisure activities and three holidays in terms of their value for money, and then, on page 42, to compare them against a similar activity/holiday in your own establishment. Before making your choice of leisure activities and holidays, consider what you will be comparing them with in your own establishment. Choose the same criteria so that the comparisons will be fair and that you complete the exercise with a good idea of how your establishment rates in terms of value for money.

It may help to imagine you are a customer in a position to afford whatever offers best value, but must decide on one activity/holiday only.

In order to make a valid cost comparison of different leisure activities, you need to look at costs over a whole year for equipment, entrance/ club membership and additional costs such as locker fees. Find out what the annual cost would be for three sports of your choice (such as playing snooker, swimming, and playing golf) played once a week in a suitable local venue. Try to choose venues that offer comparable standards of facilities.

Activity	*Club membership for year*	*Cost of buying/ hiring equipment*	*Additional entrance/ ground fees/locker hire etc.*	*Total cost for year*
1.				
2.				
3.				

With the figures in front of you, you can compare the value for money of each of the three sports. One may offer the opportunity to socialise at the same time as taking exercise; golf will cost a lot more than swimming, but each weekly sortie on the golf course will be at least a half day's leisure, whereas the swim is unlikely to last more than 45 minutes. Rate them on an appropriate scale, say 1 to 5, 5 being the highest score.

Activity	*Value for money*
1.	
2.	
3.	

Now carry out the same exercise with holidays: check with your local travel agent and establish the cost of a two-week hotel holiday in three destinations of your choice, one should be in Great Britain, the second a popular 'sun, sea and sand' destination such as Benidorm, and the third a more exclusive, long-haul destination such as Bangkok. As far as possible, compare like with like, for example three-star equivalent accommodation, bed and breakfast terms, and travelling in peak season on an inclusive tour basis, including air travel for the overseas destinations and second class rail travel for the UK destination, plus three days car hire.

Destination	*Cost of 2 week hotel-based holiday with travel, peak season*
1.	
2.	
3.	

Assess each holiday below in terms of value for money, using the same point scale as you used for the previous exercise, and appropriate criteria such as choice of sports activities available in each destination, weather, places of cultural and historical interest to visit, and night life.

Holiday	*Value for money*
1.	
2.	
3.	

Repeat the exercise for your own establishment, for example, working out the annual cost of a leisure activity if your facilities are available on a membership basis; or, the cost of a two-week holiday plus the cost of a typical journey to get to you (choose a location in the UK where some of your customers who take this sort of holiday with you do/might travel from).

Now compare the cost and value for money of the leisure activity/ holiday in your establishment with the three activities and three holidays you looked at in the previous exercises. Rank them below, so that the first on your list offers the best value for money, the last the poorest value for money. You will therefore need to apply similar criteria to determining what value for money your own establishment offers, as you decided upon for the other leisure activities and holidays you looked at.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

The next section concentrates on the factors to consider when identifying leisure opportunities.

SECTION 3
Identifying leisure opportunities

After completing this section you will be able to:

- describe some ways of benefiting from the increase in leisure demand, by making better use of existing facilities, and/or adding new ones
- explain the importance of siting leisure operations in the right location
- describe the link between accommodation and leisure facilities
- describe how leisure is regulated and organised.

The costs of setting up and operating leisure facilities need to be spread across as many customers as possible to minimise costs and, where relevant, maximise profits. The lower the cost per customer, the lower the price that has to be charged, and/or the greater the profit. Lower prices can mean higher demand, but you know that cheapness is not the customer's only consideration, there is also 'value for money'.

One way to achieve maximum utilisation of leisure facilities, is to design new facilities, or re-organise the use of existing ones, so that they can be used for a variety of purposes, and are never empty when they could be generating revenue. Say your establishment has a sports hall. Ideally, you want to have it used in the day and in the evening, every day of the week, every week of the year. You organise the sports hall so that it can be used for a variety of purposes. For example, the floor can be marked out for different games, such as badminton, netball, indoor hockey or tennis. Portable seating can transform the hall into a theatre or concert venue in the evening. Foldaway screens can divide the hall into smaller areas so that you can have separate activities going on at the same time.

Assume that you are working in a 50-bedroom hotel in an attractive, historic town, close to a motorway. Your customers are a mixture of business people and tourists. Your hotel has a bar, restaurant, and a large lounge, but no other amenities. Note below what other steps you would consider in order to benefit from the increase in leisure demand.

You may have decided that the key space which would enable you to use the hotel's existing facilities for a wider range of purposes, and thus attract more customers, is the large lounge.

The lounge could be used as a room for conferences, lectures, seminars and talks, and a special menu offered to encourage delegates to lunch or dine in the hotel's restaurant. Special weekend breaks could be offered, with a programme of talks on and visits to places of historic interest in the town. You might also consider 'murder mystery' weekends, wine lovers' or gourmet food events - the possibilities are almost endless. The versatile lounge could also be used for games evenings, bridge, chess and the like, and for classes on calligraphy, stamp collecting or art appreciation.

Perhaps your answer proposed the building of additional amenities, which would in themselves be very flexible, thus attracting a large number of new customers at different times of the day, week and year as well as increasing the number of people attracted to the hotel itself. In this case you may have decided to build a swimming pool. Did you ask yourself:

- how much it would cost to build and equip a pool-room with the necessary insulation, ventilation, water-treatment equipment, changing areas?
- what it would cost to heat?
- what it would cost to supervise and clean?
- during what periods of the day and week it would be used?
- how many people would use it?
- what sort of additional customers it might attract?
- would the provision of a swimming pool enable you to raise the hotel room rate?
- would local residents be prepared to pay for the use of the pool?

Did you think of all the ways in which a swimming pool could be used 'flexibly'? To offer underwater exercise classes and adult swimming lessons, perhaps individual tuition, or to offer breakfast by the pool to hotel residents.

Installing a swimming pool may, or may not be, the right thing to do in this particular case. You have to think about the costs, and consider whether the provision of the pool will enable you to attract sufficient additional customers at a price which will enable you to cover your costs. These points are covered in detail in *The Leisure Operation*.

Read the case study which begins on the next page, paying special attention to the opportunities for making better use of existing facilities and for developing new facilities.

Case Study: The Tropical Bird Gardens, Rode

Rode lies in the heart of the Somerset countryside and the Tropical Bird Gardens are well signposted from Bath (10 miles) and Frome (5 miles).

Open every day of the year apart from Christmas Day, the Gardens are home to over 1000 rare birds representing over 200 different species. The aviaries, all outdoors, are designed to blend in with the beautifully laid-out grounds.

The 17 acre site includes a tree trail, started 5 years ago, flower gardens, an extensive clematis collection and a chain of lakes, where all kinds of water birds can be seen. There is children's play area, gift shop, pets corner, garden sales and an information centre. A woodland steam railway was added in 1988 as an extra attraction for weekends, Bank holidays and school holidays. A licensed cafeteria operates in summer. In the winter light refreshments are available from the gift shop.

Owners, Donald and Betty Risdon, have built up the collection of birds since 1961. Previously Donald managed Dudley Zoo in the Midlands and Betty had been in catering. They had a great deal of work to do in converting what was a small market garden, clearing the jungle in the rest of the grounds, building aviaries, and obtaining birds.

The Risdons started with only a small amount of capital – it was very much a 'do it yourself' operation. Visiting the Bird Gardens in 1962, a group of zoo directors pronounced it 'a nice idea, but too far out in the country to succeed'.

This was several years before Longleat Safari Park opened its doors and it would have been hard to imagine that over the next three decades hundreds more zoos, wild life parks, and bird gardens would be developed in the UK as tourist attractions. Or that tourism would become one of the country's main industries, that two cars per family would be the norm, and that luxury coaches and an extensive motorway network would make possible a day out that was over a hundred miles away.

The weather has been the worst element the Risdons have had to overcome, ranging from blizzards, floods and hurricane winds, to very high temperatures and droughts.

The Risdon's aim has been to breed as many birds as possible in the collection. There are now successful breeding flocks of flamingos, penguins, parrots and water fowl, and swaps are done with other zoos and bird gardens. 'Brolly' the Umbrella Cockatoo, famed for his television appearances with Johnny Morris in 'Animal Magic' was bred and resides at the Gardens. He was hand-reared, which is why he is so tame.

The grounds of the Gardens are noted for their peace and tranquillity. It is always possible to find a quiet corner away from the noise of school parties and shouting peacocks!

The information centre carries the following exhibits:

- *Rode Manor 'as it was' – the house and grounds have quite an extensive history*
- *Bird Facts: details on feeding, eggs and so forth*
- *clematis and their history*
- *the latest zoo news, summer events and competitions*
- *a presentation by the Somerset Trust for Conservation.*

On the basis of the information given on the Tropical Bird Gardens, note on the page opposite your ideas for making better use of existing facilities, and for developing new facilities.

Noting that there is already an information centre at the Gardens, you might have suggested it is developed in line with current thinking into an Environmental Interpretation Centre to encourage tourists, day visitors and residents to understand and care for their environment. The centre would communicate themes, stories and messages in an enjoyable way, for example with:

- guided walks and trails
- publications
- special events, talks and lectures
- audio visual programmes and exhibitions.

So the information centre could be used to house an exhibition of various birds and plants. The exhibits could appeal to as many of the five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste and touch) as possible. This technique has been used very successfully at such places as the Thorburn Museum and Gallery at Dobwall's Theme Park, Liskeard, where there is an exhibition of wildlife as painted by Archibald Thorburn, the Victorian wildlife artist.

The visitor could use an exercise bike – when it reaches various speeds it would indicate that that is the speed an owl or swift flies at, or perhaps how fast various birds such as a chicken or ostrich run.

The exhibition could also include:

- examples of egg sizes
- a life-size collection of feathers which can be touched
- painted models to explain why birds are different colours
- a tree to show different habitats in which birds live: rooks at the top of the tree, owls in the hollows, woodpeckers and pigeons in the lower branches
- a bush with models of nesting birds such as robins
- life-size models of different bird's beaks, and of the various foods they eat
- a machine which when looked into, demonstrates what an owl sees.

You probably considered the education market. It represents an investment for the future, introducing a young market, and, in turn, their families. Schools expect a discount of 15% or so on entrance fees, so the education market is not a major revenue earner, but youngsters can be tempted to spend in the gift shop and on food and drink.

Because older children are usually involved with exams, you would aim most at primary and junior school pupils. The most popular time for visits is from April to June. Most trips are financed by parents, so are not dependent on the local authority.

Teacher's education packs and pupil packs could be provided as well as specialist education staff.

Schools and education authorities could be circulated with information. It may well be possible to get more closely involved with the education process by loaning resources to schools and encouraging them to integrate these into their curriculum.

You may also have suggested:

- tying in with local hotels to hold painting, photography or ornithological weekends and residential courses for school children
- holding 'Wheelchair Weekends'
- holding 'Clematis Weekends'
- publishing a special children's guide to the gardens which they can use on their own.

Development possibilities include:

- covered all-weather winter garden
- covered bird viewing area
- upgrading the cafeteria into a self-service restaurant with an ornithological theme. Have diagrams around the room asking, for example, how big is the span of certain birds.

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LOCATION AND TRANSPORT

Being in the right location is essential for success in the leisure industry. You must be located where it is easy and convenient for customers to reach you and where there are enough customers to make your business profitable.

The term 'catchment area' is used to describe the area from which a leisure operation draws its customers. Catchment areas vary in size according to the type of leisure operation and customer. For example, the catchment area for a dance class held in a village hall may have a radius of no more than two miles.

> An attraction like Madame Tussauds could be said to have a world-wide catchment area: visitors come from the whole of the UK and from other countries as far distant as Japan.
>
> This is not purely a question of the size of the venture: Madame Tussauds has a wide catchment area because it is virtually unique – there is nothing else quite like it in the UK or abroad. It has widespread appeal to all ages and social groups. It has an international appeal because of the nature of the exhibits which do not depend on verbal or written explanations. The entrance fee is not high and it represents good value for a special occasion. It is not the sort of place that people would visit on a regular basis, but it changes over months and years and many people make repeat visits at long intervals. It is located in London, which has very good national and international transport links. It is almost opposite an underground station, and on a large number of bus routes. It is quite close to a number of other important attractions which means that groups of tourists and school groups can visit some of these on the same one-day trip.

Catchment area size can be expressed in terms of distance or time, so the catchment area for a leisure centre could be described as being everywhere within a distance of 5 miles, or within 20 minutes travelling time. How it is calculated will depend on how the majority of customers reach the venue: on foot, or travelling by private or public transport.

This means that if you were planning to build a leisure centre to serve the whole community, you would need to locate it close to public transport so that customers of all ages and social groups can get to it – although car ownership is widespread, a lot of old people and children have to rely on public transport.

If you were planning to add some form of leisure facility to your establishment, you would need to consider whether your establishment is easily accessible to the sector of the market which you have identified as the target market for your facility. For example, if you were planning to offer needlework and embroidery classes on winter evenings at a country house hotel, you would need to be sure that those who might attend had cars, were prepared to drive on dark roads, and risk the weather turning bad while they were with you, so making their return journey difficult.

Ease of access is not just a matter of travel time. It also involves the:

- 'hassle factor', which may be the inconvenience of parking, the wait for the bus, or overcrowding on the train. For elderly and disabled people the 'hassle factor' may assume much greater importance
- cost of travel. This will be related to the other costs involved. For example, the travel costs for a family of four going by car to their annual holiday at an English seaside resort will be insignificant in comparison to the accommodation and catering costs, and it tends to be such non-travel costs that determine their choice of resort. On the other hand, for a young person using public transport to get to a weekly swimming lesson, travel costs could be a major factor.

Estimate the catchment area, expressed in travelling time, for the four leisure activities listed below. In making your estimates consider the following factors:

- *Is the activity a regular or special event?*
- *Is it planned in advance, or decided on at short notice?*
- *What sort of customers would engage in the activity?*
- *What kind of transport would, typically, be used?*
- *How much would this transport cost in relation to the overall cost of the activity?*
- *What would be the total cost of the activity, in general terms?*

1. A WEEKEND BREAK IN A COUNTRY FARMHOUSE

2. A TWICE WEEKLY VISIT TO A SWIMMING CLASS

3. A ONE WEEK HOLIDAY VISIT TO A HOLIDAY CENTRE

4. A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY VISIT TO A LONDON THEATRE

THE LEISURE EXPERIENCE

1. WEEKEND BREAK IN A COUNTRY FARMHOUSE

Travelling time: 2 to 2½ hours

The principal customers will be couples and families travelling by car. Farmhouse holidays are inexpensive and the transport cost will be low, that is the marginal cost of petrol. The main factor will be convenience. This means being able to arrive in reasonable time on Friday evening, probably after leaving work at around 5pm, and getting home at a reasonable time on Sunday evening without needing to set off too early, thus losing leisure time.

2. A TWICE WEEKLY VISIT TO SWIMMING CLASS

Travelling time: ½ hour

Principal customers might be housewives, retired people and students for daytime classes, and young working people for evening classes. Public transport will be important for all groups and free time limited, except in the case of the retired.

3. A ONE WEEK HOLIDAY VISIT TO A HOLIDAY CENTRE

Travelling time: 3 to 3½ hours

Principal customers will be families with children travelling by car. For many this will be the main annual holiday planned well in advance. Destination, facilities and accommodation cost will be the main determinants of choice. Travel costs by car on a per head basis will be relatively small. The catchment area could be smaller for families with young children who cannot tolerate long journeys.

4. A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY VISIT TO A LONDON THEATRE

Travelling time: 1 hour

Parking and drink/drive laws favour the use of a taxi or public transport and a principal constraint will be the cost of the taxi, or timings of late-night trains and buses, and how safe the couple feel to travel on them.

Now repeat the last exercise, estimating below the travelling time for each of the leisure activities offered by your establishment, and/or any you are planning to offer. Give reasons, where appropriate, for your answers, and later check these with your colleagues and/or some customers.

THE LINK BETWEEN ACCOMMODATION AND LEISURE FACILITIES

Where an overnight stay is involved, the choice of accommodation for leisure purposes is determined by the type of leisure activity, standard of comfort required and cost. Many people will stay with friends or relatives. For others there is a wide range to choose from: hotels, guesthouses, pubs, schools, college and university halls of residence, farmhouses, caravans, tents, hostels, self-catering apartments, cottages, boats, religious houses and monasteries. The choice may be a surprise: a company director who uses a four-star hotel when travelling on business, may be quite happy with simple hostel accommodation when on a walking holiday.

Your establishment will fall under one of three headings:

- accommodation with leisure facilities
- stand-alone leisure facilities with no accommodation
- stand-alone accommodation with no leisure facilities.

Holiday centres like Butlin's are a good example of how accommodation and leisure can be combined in a total package to capture a larger share of customers' spending. Visitors can spend a whole week without having to go outside the centre because all the sport and entertainment they need is provided. A large proportion of Butlin's profits comes from what customers spend in the bars, shops and restaurants that form part of the holiday centre.

In recent years there has been a trend towards developments which combine leisure and accommodation. New hotels have been built complete with swimming-pools and existing hotels have had swimming-pools added. The objective has been to offer a bigger package of facilities and services which can attract new customers and hence increase occupancy. City-centre hotels which depend on weekday business customers have found that the addition of pools and fitness centres has enabled them to attract the general public for weekend breaks. In addition, by providing indoor leisure which is independent of the weather, it has enabled them to attract holiday customers during the winter months.

However stand-alone operations do have advantages: they are less costly to build and more flexible in use. Hence there is also a trend towards the development of budget hotels. They offer low-cost accommodation, with the freedom for customers to arrange and buy their own leisure activities.

Assume that you are involved in planning a new theme park in a country area in the East Midlands. Consider whether you would include accommodation in your development and use the space below to list reasons for and against.

Your reasons for including accommodation might include the following:

- Encourage visitors to stay longer at the park and spend more money.
- Attract visitors from a wider catchment area.
- Attract conference business.

Reasons against could include the following:

- Money spent on accommodation could provide more attractions and make the park more competitive.
- Accommodation unnecessary as Midlands location is convenient for a large day visitor market.

Assume that you are organising a range of activity holidays including bird-watching, archaeology, hang-gliding, landscape watercolour painting. What sort of accommodation would you provide? Answer the four questions below as part of the process of coming to your decision.

1. What type of customer would the holidays appeal to?

2. Where would the holidays be located?

3. How much time would be spent outdoors?

4. At what time of the year would the holidays be taken?

RECOMMENDED ACCOMMODATION PROVISION

Activity holidays appeal to a wide range of customers, depending on the nature of the activity. For example, hang-gliding customers will be mainly the young and active. Watercolour landscape painters are likely to be older.

The holidays would be located in the country, although archaeology could be based in a town or city. Most of the time would be spent outdoors. The holidays would be taken mainly during the period of May to October.

Since the emphasis is on the activity and the activities are not directly related to the accommodation, the main considerations are the availability, general comfort and price. Options include country pubs, guesthouses, youth hostels and smaller hotels.

THE ORGANISATION OF LEISURE

There are many organisations involved in the leisure industry, ranging from government ministries to local sports associations. When identifying new leisure opportunities you need to be aware of the institutional and organisational framework of the industry because of the part it plays in:

- rules, procedures and standards
- health and safety regulations
- training and qualifications
- advisory services
- recognition and representation
- publicity and promotion
- development and finance.

The manager of your local authority swimming-pool asks your help to identify the authority(ies) or organisation(s) that would need to be consulted/give appropriate advice about each of the following matters. Note your reply alongside each item below.

ITEM	*AUTHORITY/IES /ORGANISATION(S)*
HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS	
SWIMMING-POOL DESIGN	
OPERATING STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATION	
QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING FOR POOL ATTENDANTS	
RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR COMPETITIONS	
ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION TO SWIMMING CLUBS	
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR POOL MANAGERS	
ALCOHOL LICENCE FOR THE POOL RESTAURANT	

HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS	Health and Safety Executive Home Office (Fire Precautions)
SWIMMING POOL DESIGN	Sports Council, Technical Unit Royal Institute of British Architects
OPERATING STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATION	Sports Council ("Safety in Swimming Pools") Institute of Baths and Recreation Management
QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING FOR POOL ATTENDANTS	Amateur Swimming Association Royal Life Saving Society Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management Institute of Baths and Recreation Management Institute of Swimming Teachers and Coaches
RULES AND PROCEDURES FOR COMPETITIONS	Amateur Swimming Association and affiliated county swimming associations and clubs
ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION TO SWIMMING CLUBS	Affiliated county swimming association Central Council for Physical Recreation
CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT FOR POOL MANAGERS	Local Authority Conditions of Service Advisory Board Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management
ALCOHOL LICENCE FOR THE RESTAURANT	Clerk to the Magistrates

It is useful for anybody working in leisure to have some understanding of the structure and organisation of the tourism industry. This is demonstrated by the way in which the promotion of tourism operates.

Overall policy for the promotion of tourism is set by the Department of Trade and Industry. The DTI works through four operating Boards which it appoints and finances. These are the British Tourist Authority (BTA) and the English, Scottish and Welsh Tourist Boards (ETB, STB and WTB).

The BTA is responsible for selling Britain and attracting tourist visitors from abroad. The ETB, STB and WTB work with the BTA to attract foreign visitors, but their main job is promotion to their own nationals. So, the ETB has to sell England to the English. It does this in various ways. For example, it operates an accommodation grading scheme and a network of tourist information centres. It publishes and advertises a range of holiday guides. It provides advisory services to operators of holiday accommodation and tourist attractions.

The English Tourist Board works in turn through a system of regional boards; for example, the West Country, East Anglia, South East England Boards, to which it provides funds and support services. The regional boards promote tourism to their own regions and work with commercial operators, like hotel groups and local authority tourism and leisure departments. Going a stage further down the organisation 'tree', the tourism and leisure departments for places like Skegness and Brighton work with local hotel, guesthouse and amusement park owners to promote the town with guides and promotional events.

Promotion of the arts works on a similar basis: the Department of Education and Science (DES) operates through the Arts Council, which in turn works through Regional Arts Associations. They liaise with local authorities and private sector bodies to fund and promote drama, dance, music and painting at the local level.

The objective of these structures is two-fold. First, to achieve overall co-ordination of policy and provide a framework within which different bodies can co-operate. Second, to provide for representation at the 'grass-roots' level.

There will be many occasions when you have to communicate or work with leisure organisations, so it is useful to know how they operate and the way in which they make decisions.

Select any two of the activities listed below, and for each find out and indicate in the table:

- *the name of the national organisation – if there is one*
- *whether there are regional or local branches*
- *the principal activities of the organisations – for example, running competitions or training schemes*
- *how the organisation is financed – for example, government or local authority grants, membership subscriptions, sponsorship.*

CHOICE OF ACTIVITY:

1. Lawn tennis *2. Soccer* *3. Chess*

4. Amateur dramatics *5. Bridge* *6. Windsurfing*

ACTIVITY CHOSEN	*ACTIVITY CHOSEN*
NATIONAL ORGANISATION	*NATIONAL ORGANISATION*
REGIONAL/LOCAL BRANCHES	*REGIONAL/LOCAL BRANCHES*
PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES	*PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES*
SOURCES OF FINANCE	*SOURCES OF FINANCE*

If you selected lawn tennis your answer should have included the following:

NATIONAL ORGANISATION

Lawn Tennis Association

REGIONAL/LOCAL BRANCHES

10 regional offices

Over 130 County Associations to which clubs and schools are affiliated.

Individual membership scheme.

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The Lawn Tennis Association is the governing body for professional and amateur tennis. It establishes and supervises the rules of the game, tournament regulations and disciplinary procedures. A key objective is to develop the game through running tournaments, coaching and award schemes.

SOURCES OF FINANCE

Membership subscriptions and sponsorship such as the Cliff Richards and Coca-Cola Coaching Schemes.

This ends *The Leisure Experience*. You should now turn to *The Leisure Operation*. This self-study unit deals with the special requirements and priorities in the development and management of a leisure operation. It looks at four key elements:

- evaluating options
- putting the development process into practice
- preparing an operational plan
- setting standards of customer service.